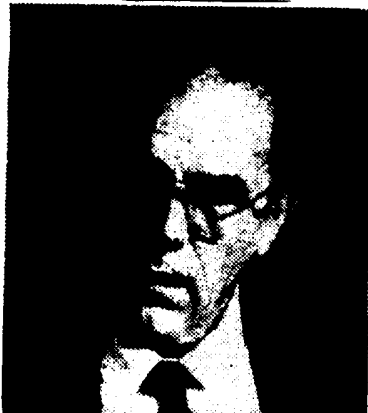


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LaRouche Savors Fame That May Ruin Him



The New York Times

Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr.

WASHINGTON, April 3 — Since his emergence from obscurity two weeks ago, Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr. has used his newfound prominence to promote his extremist theories, clearly relishing the national attention that Democratic leaders hope will destroy his chances of mainstream support.

The upset victories of two LaRouche candidates in last month's Illinois Democratic primary have brought him a barrage of national attention unlike anything his movement has experienced in its 20-year odyssey from the far left to its present eccentric positions, which defy description in conventional political terms.

Building on that attention, Mr. LaRouche, a self-proclaimed economics expert who has gained a tiny percentage of the vote in three Presidential candidacies, hopes with his followers to retail his philosophy to farmers, blue-collar workers and members of minority groups.

Democratic leaders, stunned by the Illinois results, say they believe voters cast their ballots unaware of the candidates' connections to Mr. LaRouche and such LaRouche beliefs as that the Queen of England is a drug dealer and that Henry A. Kissinger is a Soviet "agent of influence."

"Their nominations were not the result of voting by an informed electorate," a recent memorandum from the Democratic National Committee said.

He Sees Important Change

Fearing similar results elsewhere, party leaders say they have begun a major "education" program to warn the electorate, believing that the scrutiny being given to Mr. LaRouche and his theories will quickly wither whatever political support he has.

The following article is based on reporting by Robin Toner and Joel Brinkley and was written by Miss Toner.

Special to The New York Times

But in a telephone interview this week — his organization would not permit a personal interview — Mr. LaRouche contended that a sea change in American politics was under way, with a new receptivity among the voters to his philosophy and his movement.

In the LaRouche world view, gleaned from his comments, speeches and literature, Lyndon LaRouche was a figure of national and international prominence long before the Illinois primary, so prominent that he believes himself to be the target of assassination plots from a wide variety of forces from around the world.

Yet mainstream political leaders have long considered him no more than an eccentric nuisance; LaRouche followers have repeatedly been accused of harassing his perceived enemies, charges Mr. LaRouche denied.

Wesley McCune, director of Group Research Inc., which studies extremist groups, said the LaRouche organization "couldn't have gotten a better break than to have all this outrage" following the Illinois primary. "They've never before gotten so much press, so much media," he said. "Groups like that don't care what you say about them. They can tell their followers: 'Look at what the media, the Rockefellers, and all the others are doing to me, your great leader.'"

Mr. LaRouche has announced his fourth run for the Presidency and says he can see no one else on the horizon who can do the job. His political organization says "LaRouche Democrats" is a term "which threatens to become as widely used as 'F.D.R. Democrats,' 'Kennedy Democrats,' or 'Jefferson Democrats.'"

Mr. LaRouche's followers say more than 780 candidates are running for office this year under the aegis of the LaRouche organization, although they refuse to release a list. In the interview, Mr. LaRouche said he believed 1986 might be the breakthrough year for his philosophy.

But while some of the candidates running under the LaRouche banner are longtime supporters, others indicate they know little about the movement's philosophy and positions. One, a United States Senate candidate from Iowa, said he became involved with Mr. LaRouche's organization, the National Democratic Policy Committee, because he assumed it was an affiliate of the national Democratic Party. There is no connection.

Some Standard Issues, Some Bizarre Theories

At first glance, the issues emphasized by Mr. LaRouche's political group, such as supporting the idea of a space-based defense against missile attacks, seem a normal part of the political debate.

In recent speeches and articles, Mr. LaRouche urges a return to traditional moral values, warns of a Soviet military buildup, assails drug trafficking and expresses a deep confidence in the progress of science and technology. His political group has placed a particular focus on the outbreak of AIDS, urging a program of mandatory mass testing and the quarantining of those who suffer from the acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

In the interview, Mr. LaRouche said such issues as AIDS, crime and economic distress were attracting increasing numbers of blue-collar workers, farmers and minorities to him.

But behind these and other themes that might raise few eyebrows at a meeting of conservatives is a constellation of conspiracy theories, articulated in language far beyond the normal bounds of political discourse.

Asked if he believed that Queen Elizabeth II was knowingly involved in drug trafficking, for example, Mr. LaRouche said, "Of course she is."

He also argues that a variety of forces are plotting to kill him. In the interview he said the K.G.B., the Soviet security agency, was "on my tail." He said Mr. Kissinger, the former Secretary of State, had "run operations against me, and these have been operations that involved assassination threats and assassination potentialities."

British intelligence has also worked against him, Mr. LaRouche said, and numerous others have plotted to kill him. Asked about these accusations, he said, "You can't put them all in the same — they are not all part of one coherent plot." But, he added, "in each case where we name someone, there is a basis for it." Now, he said, "I have got Colombian drug pushers and some others — there's a hit out against me."

The opening sentence of his autobiography, published in 1979, said that "the most powerful adversary available to anyone in the Western World has not only expressed a wish for my early demise" but "has set into motion specialized capabilities of an assassination-relevant sort."

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As a result of those fears, Mr. LaRouche lives on a heavily guarded estate in Leesburg, Va., and said he did not permit news cameras on the site because he feared disclosure of his security arrangements. "The fact that it exists is no secret," he said. "But how the details — where people are posted, what they do and how they do it — that's a road map for an assassin."

A 'Necktie Party' For Secretary Shultz

Mr. Kissinger is one of the most frequent targets of Mr. LaRouche's attacks. In his speeches and writings, Mr. LaRouche has accused Mr. Kissinger of being a "Soviet agent of influence," of "orchestrating" the 1973 war in the Middle East and the 1973-74 oil crisis and of generally playing "a key role in many bloody and treasonous acts against vital U.S. strategic interests."

Most recently, Mr. LaRouche accused Mr. Kissinger of helping to topple the Philippine leader, Ferdinand E. Marcos. In an article in the Feb. 28 issue of Executive Intelligence Review, a publication affiliated with his movement, Mr. LaRouche described Mr. Marcos as "a leader committed to gaining for the Philippines the same kinds of benefits which our forefathers described in the Declaration of Independence."

In the interview, Mr. LaRouche said Mr. Kissinger "should be exposed for what he is." "He's evil," he continued. "I believe in redemption, but I haven't seen any redeeming qualities in Henry Kissinger."

Mr. LaRouche also asserts that there is an international network of drug traffickers that includes not only the British monarchy but numerous banks and public officials.

Other frequent targets of Mr. LaRouche and his followers are the International Monetary Fund, "the Eastern Establishment," W. Averell Harriman and the State Department.

A recent editorial in New Solidarity, the LaRouche-affiliated newspaper, opposes the Reagan Administration's campaign to win renewed aid for the Nicaraguan rebels and blames Secretary of State George P. Shultz in large part for the policy.

It concludes: "Wouldn't it be more sensible — and a whole lot more fun — to 'support George Shultz' and his allies by organizing an old-fashioned necktie party on the steps of the State Department? There's no need to break the law, of course. Let's give Shultz a fair trial first — and then hang him."

Asked about that, Mr. LaRouche replied: "That's a little bit hyperbolic. But the point is this man is committing something which amounts to treason."

Mr. LaRouche also persistently warns of Soviet plans for world domination, in sometimes apocalyptic

terms. And he has been accused of anti-Semitism, but in the interview he denied that allegation. What he opposes, he said, is "religious Zionism."

Charges of Heckling And Kissinger Scuffle

The controversy surrounding Mr. LaRouche and his organization involves more than oratory. Over the years there have been persistent complaints that LaRouche supporters have harassed, heckled and menaced people they perceived as critics or opponents. "Of the groups I had to deal with," said Charles T. Manatt Jr., the former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, "I considered them by far the biggest bane of my existence."

LaRouche supporters dogged the 1984 campaign of the Democratic Presidential nominee, Walter F. Mondale, according to Mr. Mondale's campaign manager, Robert G. Beckel. "They clearly have an organization, and they know where you're going to be, and they know a lot about schedules," Mr. Beckel said. "And they were effective, early on, disrupting Mondale speeches."

Mr. Kissinger, a spokesman said, has been heckled or picketed by LaRouche supporters on several occasions, and he was also the focus of perhaps the most widely known incident between a LaRouche supporter and a public figure.

In 1982, Henry and Nancy Kissinger were in Newark International Airport when a LaRouche supporter approached the couple and began asking questions, including one that a judge later described as "offensive." Mr. LaRouche acknowledged that his supporter asked Mr. Kissinger: "Is it true that you sleep with young boys at the Carlyle Hotel?" Mr. LaRouche added that he considered it an "appropriate question."

The LaRouche supporter brought a charge of simple assault after a scuffle with Mrs. Kissinger, who was found not guilty.

A former member of the LaRouche organization, who asked that his name not be published because he feared reprisals, said, "Lyndon is particularly vindictive against reporters who have written about him." He said he had been assigned by the organization to harass reporters and others with late-night death threats and demonstrations at their homes.

Mr. LaRouche described the complaints of harassment as "garbage," although he added, "Maybe every once in a while someone associated with me gets a little freaked out and curses somebody out." But he argued that his supporters were the victims of harassment, not the perpetrators.

From Right to Left And Back to Right

Mr. LaRouche was born in Rochester, N.H., of conservative Quaker parents. But he started his political life as a Communist, he wrote 12 years ago in one of his organization's first publications, The Campaigner.

More recently, as his philosophy has undergone a polar change to right-wing extremism, Mr. LaRouche has revised his description of the early days.

For example, a 1974 article in one of his publications said he was briefly attached to the Communist Party International, then became "a sort of hardened Trotskyite."

Today, Mr. LaRouche says "I was never in" the Communist Party, adding that "I went there a few times, talked to them a few times, and when I found out what they were," departed.

He was a member of the Socialist Workers Party for 17 years, according to an article written under a pseudonym, Lyn Marcus, in 1974. But today, he says he remained a member only because an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation "wanted me to work for them under cover" and "inform for them." He added, "I would not inform, but I said I would look at this thing, as a good citizen."

Mr. LaRouche later formed the National Caucus of Labor Committees and a political group called the United States Labor Party. An early member of his movement said, "Most everyone in it had been active in one or another left-wing organizations."

To some observers and former members, the organization soon took on characteristics of a cult, a term that causes members today to bristle. But the former member, who was in the LaRouche organization for more than a decade, said: "If you don't apply the word cult to LaRouche, it has no meaning. The people in it are totally dominated by the whims of one man. They break up their marriages at his suggestion, or they come back together."

Current LaRouche supporters say that is not true, and Mr. LaRouche said some former members who have criticized him were never associated with his group.

Mr. LaRouche first ran for President in 1976, as a candidate of his United States Labor Party, but got only about 40,000 votes. Still, starting in the mid-1970's, as he turned to the right and as his group began attracting curious attention from the news media, his writings increasingly emphasized his own perceived political importance.

In a 1979 autobiography, he wrote, "During the last several years it has become increasingly evident that I have gained some degree of importance in respect to shaping current world history." He also wrote that "by

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a large margin of advantage" he was "the leading economist of the 20th century to date."

In 1980, Mr. LaRouche and his followers founded the National Democratic Policy Committee. Almost immediately, Democratic Party officials objected that Mr. LaRouche was trying to deceive people, leading them to believe that his group was associated with the Democratic Party, an idea Mr. LaRouche disputes.

Over the years, some people have been deceived.

In 1982, for example, Mr. LaRouche managed to arrange an appointment with the President of Mexico, José Lopez Portillo. Officers at the American Embassy asked Mexican officials why the president had agreed to such a curious meeting. "The Mexicans told us that Mr. LaRouche had presented himself as an official of the Democratic Party," an official recalled.

Some Candidates Know Little About Leader

Even some of Mr. LaRouche's own followers appear to be confused. Juan Cortez, who is running for the United States Senate in Iowa and is described in LaRouche literature as a supporter, said he became affiliated with the National Democratic Policy Committee because "I assumed it was the policy-making organization" of the the national Democratic Party. "The first time I knew I was a LaRouche candidate was when I read about it in the local paper here" in Cedar Rapids, he said.

Today N.D.P.C. literature boasts that the organization has recruited hundreds of citizens to run for political office as LaRouche Democrats. But some, though certainly not all, of the recent enlistees said they had had little contact with Mr. LaRouche's movement, and several said they were unfamiliar with his full platform.

"That would be rather astonishing" if true, Mr. LaRouche said.

Cullen Meyer, a 64-year-old Ohio veterinarian, said a LaRouche representative called him one night in February and asked if he wanted to run for Congress. "I don't know where they got my name," Dr. Meyer said.

He said he was a longtime Democrat and had always wanted to run for office, so he decided to accept the offer. The LaRouche organization got the required signatures to secure him a place on the ballot in the Democratic primary for Congress, he said.

When his local newspaper asked him if he was a LaRouche candidate, Mr. Meyer replied: "I am generally speaking a liberal, not a follower of a rigid conservative group, although I have associated with rigid conservative people all my life." Mr. Meyer said he was disturbed at the "holier than thou" attitude expressed by many people toward the LaRouche group.

Tom Ottenad, a Washington correspondent of The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, said he was watching television in his suburban Maryland home one evening in 1984 when a LaRouche supporter knocked on the door.

Mr. Ottenad suggested that the man leave some literature, but he said the LaRouche supporter replied: "What I really wanted to talk to you about was, would you run for Congress against Mike Barnes," the Democratic representative from Mr. Ottenad's district.

Mr. Ottenad said he declined.